

BRAINTREE & BOCKING URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT OF MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1942.

Public Health Offices,
St. Peter's Close,
Bocking,
Braintree.

July, 1943.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit a brief report on the health and sanitary conditions of the district during the year 1942. Owing to war conditions the usual type of report has again to be curtailed. For similar reasons no separate report has been submitted by the Chief Sanitary Inspector, but a short review of the work of his department is included in this report.

Throughout the year the general health of the Urban district has been good with no serious outbreak of infectious disease.

GENERAL HEALTH SERVICES.

There were no changes in the general health services provided in the district during the year.

Legislation in Force.

No new byelaws were adopted or came into force during the year.

Staff.

In December Dr. Moffat was released to join the Forces. In so far as the Urban District was concerned, I took over his duties as from that date.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

Water.

The Notley Road and Bocking Waterworks were again used for supply purposes during the year.

At Notley Road the replacement borehole pump was installed by 20th May, and, on test, recorded just over 20,000 g.p.h. Prior to this it was necessary to run the steam pump together with the electric borehole pump, to maintain an adequate supply.

At Bocking an additional electric motor has been installed to enable both sets of pumps to be run together; a recent test shows that each will require an overhaul soon.

A small quantity was also taken from Messrs. Courtauld's, Bocking while the electric borehole pump was being replaced and an analysis of supply proved satisfactory.

The Chlorination plant has operated continuously except for one or two slight mechanical break downs. A further chlorination plant for the emergency booster supply from Courtauld's is under consideration.

New arrangements made by the County Council now provide for a monthly analysis of the water supplied to consumers, and a quarterly analysis of the raw supply.

Four samples were taken during the year. Three from Braintree and one from Bocking. Reports were received from the County Bacteriologist as follows :-

Braintree Supply.

This sample is reasonably clear and bright containing only a few particles of debris in suspension. The water is neutral in reaction, has moderate hardness, a high but not excessive content of salinity and is of satisfactory organic and bacterial purity. These results are consistent with a wholesome water suitable for drinking and domestic purposes.

The colour reaction given with ortho-tolidine solution is due to nitrites and not to free chlorine.

Bocking Supply.

This sample is not quite clear and bright but is not unduly turbid. The water is neutral in reaction, hard in character although not to an excessive degree, contains no excess of salinity, no free chlorine and no metals apart from a minute trace of iron.

It is of satisfactory organic quality and a high standard of bacterial purity. These results are consistent with a wholesome water suitable for drinking and domestic purposes.

Drainage and Sewerage.

Braintree Works.

Although the effluent continues to be unsatisfactory according to the County standard there has been considerable improvement in its quality since the tanks have been emptied more frequently and improved working arrangements made. The demand for dried sludge by farmers has resulted in the removal of all the accumulation of past years.

Four samples were taken shewing impurity figures of approximately half that of the previous year.

Bocking Sewerage Works.

This works continues to produce a satisfactory effluent. Half the sprinkler arms were replaced this year, the remainder will be replaced in 1943.

Of three analyses one was slightly worse than usual on account of frost.

Three new connections were made to the sewers during 1942.

Sanitary Inspection.

During the year, inspections were made as a result of complaints of nuisances and of defects in dwelling houses etc.

Swimming Baths and Pools.

Samples were taken from the Council's Swimming Pool and one privately owned pool in the District during the year, and the Bacteriologist's reports were satisfactory.

HOUSING.

No inspections were carried out. Visits on complaint were made in respect of defects. Certain houses previously condemned under the Housing Acts were put into a reasonable state of repair, and used for housing homeless people, under temporary licence granted by the Council.

Milk.

There was no change in the licences granted to producers and retailers of designated milks. Owing to complaints of souring five samples were taken in 1942.

Meat.

The scheme for centralised slaughtering under the Ministry of Food continued during the year. Two slaughter houses and occasionally a third have been used exclusively by the Ministry. The remainder of the privately owned slaughterhouses have not been used. Licensed slaughterhouses in the district numbered 6, and knackers' yards 1.

During the year, 9,413 animals were slaughtered for human consumption. Of these 8,822 or 97.7% were inspected. The total amount of unsound food condemned during this period was 23.89 tons. In most cases the food was salvaged and used for trade purposes other than human consumption.

British Restaurant.

The Sanitary Inspector's Department has been relieved of all duties in connection with this restaurant.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

During the year cases of notifiable infectious disease occurred as follows :-

| | | | |
|----------------|-----|-----------------------|----|
| Scarlet Fever | 8. | Ophthalmia Neonatorum | 1. |
| Pneumonia | 4. | Measles | 5. |
| Diphtheria | 24. | Puerperal Pyrexia | 1. |
| Whooping Cough | 23. | | |

There were three deaths from Diphtheria in 1942.

DIPHTHERIA PROPHYLAXIS.

The scheme for the immunisation of children under the age of 15 continued in 1942. Regular Sessions were held at the Combined Treatment Centre, Coggeshall Road, for pre-school children and for those school-children who had missed immunisation when the schools in the district were visited in 1941. The total number of children completely immunised at the end of 1942 was as follows :-

| | |
|--|-------|
| Children aged 5 to 15 - i.e., school children | 1708. |
| Children under 5 years - i.e., children under school age | 521. |

These figures represent approximately 79% and 48% of the child population of the district in the respective age groups.

Tuberculosis.

The total number of cases on the Tuberculosis Register at the end of the year was 116 and was made up as follows :-

| Respiratory. | | Non-Respiratory. | |
|--------------|--------|------------------|--------|
| Male | Female | Male | Female |
| 43 | 29 | 18 | 26 |

New cases notified during the year were 42 in number and were made up as follows :-

| Respiratory. | | Non-Respiratory. | |
|--------------|--------|------------------|--------|
| Male | Female | Male | Female |
| 13 | 11 | 27 | 11 |

During the year there were 5 deaths from Tuberculosis.

EVACUATION.

During the year considerable time was spent on finding and equipping accommodation for homeless persons.

Boleyns Hostel continues to be used as a treatment hostel for evacuees from a considerable portion of southern England.

The home for aged persons at Fox Meadow, Courtauld Road has now been given up and the inmates transferred to Chelmsford.

You will understand that the bulk of this report is based on the work of my predecessor, Dr. Moffat. I wish to express my thanks to the Council Officers who have assisted me in compiling it.

I am,

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

L. YOUATT.

Acting Medical Officer of Health.